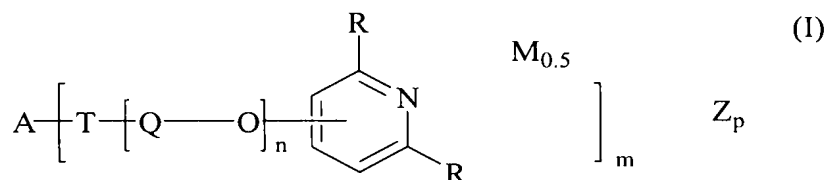


IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claims 1-9: (previously cancelled).

Claim 10 (Currently Amended): A polymer of transition-metal-bridged units of the formula (1)



where

A is an m-valent organic radical,

T independently of one another are O or NH,

Q independently of one another are $\text{CHR}^1\text{-CH}_2$ where R^1 is H or optionally substituted C_{1-6} -alkyl,

R independently of one another are H, 2-pyridyl, 2-imidazolyl, 2-imidazolyl, 2-thiazolyl, 2-thiazolyl, 2-pyridazyl, 2-pyrimidyl, carboxyl, carboxylic ester radical, carboxamide radical, carboxylate, phosphonate, where at least one of the radicals R is different from H,

M is Fe^{2+} , Fe^{3+} , Co^{2+} , Co^{3+} , Zn^{2+} , Ru^{2+} , Os^{2+} , Ni^{2+} ,

Z is SO_4^{2-} , CH_3OO^- , BF_4^- , SF_6^- , Cl^- , I^- , PF_6^- , perchlorate,

n is 1 to 10,000,

m is 2 to 100,

p is a number which corresponds to the charge balance within the polymer,

where the number average molecular weight of the polymer is at least ~~30,000~~
200,000.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein A is derived from polyols, polyamines, polyalkanolamines, polyethyleneimines, polyvinylamine and alkoxylates thereof.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein R is in each case 2-pyridyl.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein Q is $\text{CHR}^1\text{-CH}_2$ where R^1 is H or methyl.

Claim 14 (Withdrawn, Currently Amended): A process for the preparation of ~~polymers~~ a polymer as claimed in claim 10, which comprises introducing non-transition-metal-bridged units of the formula (I), whose charge is balanced by counterions Z, into a solvent, and then reacting them with a salt ~~salts~~ of the ~~metals~~ metal M with mixing, where the rate of addition of the metal ~~salts~~ salt is at least 1 mol/s.

Claim 15 (Withdrawn, Currently Amended): A process as claimed in claim 14, wherein the concentration of the units of the formula (I) in the solvent prior to the reaction with the metal ~~salts~~ salt is at least 3% by weight, based on the total solution.

Claim 16 (Withdrawn, Currently Amended): A method of increasing the viscosity of ~~liquids~~ a liquid, comprising adding the polymer as claimed in claim 10 to a the liquid.

Claim 17 (Withdrawn, Currently Amended): The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said adding for simultaneously imparting ~~imparting~~ imparts color to the liquid.

Claim 18 (Cancelled).

Claim 19 (New): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein m is 2 or 3.

Claim 20 (New): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein R independently of one another are H, 2-pyridyl, 2-imidazolynyl, 2-imidazolyl, 2-thiazolynyl, and 2-thiazolyl.

Claim 21 (New): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein both R are 2-pyridyl radicals.

Claim 22 (New): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein the R-substituted pyridyl group in formula (1) is a 4-pyridyl group.

Claim 23 (New): A polymer as claimed in claim 21, wherein the R-substituted pyridyl group in formula (1) is a 4-pyridyl group.

Claim 24 (New): The method as claimed in claim 16, wherein said liquid is a shampoo or shower gel.

Claim 25. (New) A composition comprising a polymer as claimed in claim 10 and a complexing agent for metal M.

Claim 26 (New): A polymer as claimed in claim 10, wherein said polymer is bis(2, 2':6', 2''-terpyrid-4'-yl)FeCl₂ poly(ethylene oxide)_n, where n is 10 to 200.

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Claim 27 (New): The polymer as claimed in claim 26, wherein n is 180.